

Why We Will Fight #3

10 May 1998

By Mike Vanderboegh, 1ACR

During World War II, Hollywood joined the war effort by producing a series of documentary films entitled "Why We Fight", which illustrated for the troops and the folks back home on the assembly lines the principles and history of our country, the evils of fascism and Nazism and the threat that those evil regimes posed to our way of life.

Since the advent of the Clinton Administration and the Waco massacre, liberty-loving Americans have been engaged in what amounts to a Cold War against that criminal regime. The Administration has been doing everything in its power to disarm peaceable, law-abiding citizens, and the citizenry (true to their heritage and the law of unintended consequences) have been arming at an unprecedented and prodigious rate.

Despite our best political efforts to defend our Second Amendment rights by the time-honored ways given us by the Founders, our position continues to erode and the Cold War continues. But lest the enemies of liberty and the Constitution conclude that, after the final legal wall is breached, we will not fight to defend our rights, we must enunciate now why we WILL fight. So they will know. So we will know. Why will we fight to keep the free exercise of our right to arms? That is what this series proposes to answer, in the tradition of "Why We Fight."

In previous editions of WWWF, we have discussed: Reason #1: Firearms freedom as the guarantee of self-government; Reason #2: A disarmed citizenry as sitting ducks for genocide; Reason #3: Firearms have been guaranteed to individual Americans by the unambiguous language of the Second Amendment, which merely ratifies a God-given, inalienable right.

In this edition of Why We Will Fight, the third of series, you will find yet another answer to the question.

Reason #4: To preserve our God-given and inalienable right of self-defense.

It happened coincidentally that the same day my hometown newspaper, The Birmingham News, ran a reprint of Marie Cocco's Newsday column (to which I instantly responded as seen below), the Chicago Tribune ran a column of John Lott's entitled "The Cold, Hard Facts About Guns." (I am indebted to "XFreedomX" for forwarding it to my attention.) As I had referred to Lott's study in my response, I include it here as one more reason WHY WE WILL FIGHT! -- Mike Vanderboegh, 1ACR, Editor

Birmingham News
Friday, May 8, 1998

Its Own Worst Enemy
NRA can lobby for whatever it wants, but can't change truths.
By Marie Cocco, columnist for New York Newsday.
These truths are self-evident:

On Dec. 7, 1993, a deranged man named Colin Ferguson opened fire on a Long Island Rail Road train in New York, killing six commuters and wounding 19 others in a random, bloody rampage. Among the dead was Dennis McCarthy and among those gravely wounded was his son, Kevin.

Ferguson had traveled to California to purchase his weapon, and equipped it with an assault-style magazine and Black Talon bullets, which explode on impact and shred human tissue. Their manufacturer has since pulled them from the market. Ferguson purchased his weapon after giving a motel room for an address and waiting 15 days.

GUN CONTROL PROPONENT

Carolyn McCarthy, widow of Dennis and mother of Kevin, channeled her grief and her rage into political activism, becoming first, a gun-control advocate, and now a Democratic member of the U.S. Congress who is a leading proponent of gun control.

She is, according to politicians of both parties, so lacking in partisanship and so unwavering in her commitment to doing what she believes is right that she not only gets a few things done but often annoys the heck out of career politicians who chafe at her refusal to play her game.

Her story, told Sunday night in the NBC movie *The Long Island Incident*, is truer than most everything else on television. And by now it is old news. Because of who she is and what she represents, McCarthy's first run for office in 1996 and her victory over then-Rep. Dan Frisa, R-N.Y., already was the stuff of national headlines and coast-to-coast broadcasts.

So you would think that an organization like the National Rifle Association and its top gun Charlton Heston would simply let the movie pass.

Because there is nothing the NRA can say that will change the truth about what happened on the train that day or what happened atop the Empire State Building four years later and what has happened in school yards and spring dances around the country lately. People who shouldn't have guns get them because guns are easier to get in the United States than in any other modern nation. The NRA makes sure it stays that way.

For the NRA, McCarthy's story is terribly troubling. Especially the part in the movie when, having been given a primer on the workings of the Black Talon bullet that ripped apart a portion of her son's brain, she overcomes her reluctance to get involved: "In a week, it'll be some other wife or mom," she says.

The NRA can't change the truth. It can't change McCarthy and it can't easily attack her. But the gun lobby must do something, so it is attacking Barbara Streisand, who produced the movie. It accuses her of "profiteering on the back of a tragedy."

The NRA also calls Streisand "extraordinarily liberal."

The NRA is upset that its lobbyists are portrayed as caring more about gun owners' rights than the rights of families whose loved ones have been slaughtered. This is a distortion, the group believes, and unfair.

So, in fairness, we should examine what NRA lobbyists have been up to lately.

Last month, a member of the NRA's board of directors-- Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, -- tried to use an emergency spending bill meant for disaster relief and military operations in Bosnia and the Persian Gulf to partly reverse the Clinton administration's expanded ban on the importation of

assault-style weapons. The weapons were altered specifically to get around the domestic assault weapons ban enacted after the Long Island shooting and to circumvent an even older ban on imports imposed by former President Bush. Craig withdrew his amendment because colleagues wanted quick action on the spending bill, but the NRA is expected to try again.

"RIGHT-TO-CARY" BILL

Another priority is enactment of a national "right-to-carry" bill. This would allow anyone with a permit to carry a concealed weapon in one state to carry the gun in the other 49 states. So getting a concealed-weapons permit in Montana or Virginia would make it OK to carry a hidden gun in New York, too.

Now the NRA has a right to lobby for whatever it wants and to criticize Streisand and her movie. In fact, the group is right in saying the film included distortions. The biggest was its omission, at McCarthy's insistence, of any scene showing the horror of what really went on inside that train.

If More Guns = Less Crime then Why Disarm?

Gun Control Advocates Are Everyone's Worst Enemy

To the Editorial Page Editor, Mr. Ron Casey
The Birmingham News
8 May 1998
Via Fax

In keeping with your anti-firearms editorial page bias, The Birmingham News scored another blow against the Founder's Constitution with Marie Cocco's cockeyed column: "Its Own Worst Enemy: NRA Can Lobby For Whatever It Wants, But Can't Change Truths." (Birmingham News, 8 May 1998).

Beginning with words that mock the Founders of our Republic-- "These truths are self-evident", Cocco describes the 1993 Long Island Rail Road massacre by Colin Ferguson (the subject of a Barbara Streisand-produced NBC movie which brought anti-firearm propaganda to the level of a Leni Reifenstahl celluloid Nazi classic.

Blaming the gun rather than the deranged gunner operating in a strict gun- controlled jurisdiction, Cocco spends the rest of her column vilifying the NRA's efforts to resist the firearms-confiscation-by-stages plans of the Clinton Administration and its left-wing allies, who now have one of the Long Island widows as a postergirl for "Brady II."

Among the NRA-backed proposals which Cocco scorns is a national "right-to- carry" bill which, she sniffs, "would allow anyone with a permit to carry a concealed weapon in one state to carry the gun in the other 49 states. So getting a concealed-weapons permit in Montana or Virginia would make it OK to carry a hidden gun in New York, too."

OK, let's go there. Colin Ferguson picked that train because he knew that the passengers were highly unlikely to be able to resist him. The victims were travelling from one jurisdiction which forbids the carrying of concealed weapons by almost all law-abiding citizens to another, similar jurisdiction. The train was posted with "No Firearms Allowed" signs. Ferguson himself was only finally stopped by brave unarmed passengers who jumped him when he had to pause to reload.

Let's say that in 1993 we already had a national right-to-carry law, and a visiting businessman from Montana was sitting down the car from Ferguson when he began to fire. And let's say that businessman, unlike the sheeplike New Yorkers penned up on that train, knew what to do with the legally-carried pistol under his coat. Is it such a stretch to conclude that Ferguson's victim list would have been much shorter and that the madman himself might not have survived his foray into crime?

Recent studies by social statisticians such as Lott (which are NOT touted on the editorial pages of the Birmingham News) show that concealed carry laws reduce crime by causing criminals to move into jurisdictions where the law-abiding are disarmed, and thus are rendered much easier victims.

In truth, it is the gun control advocates who are their own worst enemy. It may be a bromide, but the Founders would have agreed: "When guns are outlawed, only outlaws will have guns." Outlaws, and tyrants.

Mike Vanderboegh
P.O. Box 926
Pinson, AL 35126
pager (205) 320-4540

And now, for Mr. Lott's wisdom.....

In a message dated 98-05-09 23:45:57 EDT, you write:

Subj: Chicago Law Professor: "More Guns, Less Crime"
Date: 98-05-09 23:45:57 EDT
From: XFreeomsX
To: XFreeomsX
BCC: Mo10Cav

THE following superb commentary in the editorial section of the May 8th Chicago Tribune is a must read and one you all may want to save for future reference.

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## THE COLD, HARD FACTS ABOUT GUNS

By John R. Lott Jr.

John Lott Jr., the John M. Olin law and economics fellow at the University of Chicago School of Law, is the author of "More Guns, Less Crime."

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America may indeed be obsessed with guns, but much of what passes as fact simply isn't true. The news media's focus on only tragic outcomes, while ignoring tragic events that were avoided, may be responsible for some misimpressions.

Horrific events like the recent shooting in Arkansas receive massive news coverage, as they should, but the 2.5 million times each year that people use guns defensively are never discussed--including cases where public shootings are stopped before they happen.

Unfortunately, these misimpressions have real costs for people's safety.

Many myths needlessly frighten people and prevent them from defending themselves most effectively.

**Myth No. 1:** When one is attacked, passive behavior is the safest approach. The Department of Justice's National Crime Victimization Survey reports that the probability of serious injury from an attack is 2.5 times greater for women offering no resistance than for women resisting with a gun. Men also benefit from using a gun, but the benefits are smaller: offering no resistance is 1.4 times more likely to result in serious injury than resisting with a gun.

**Myth No. 2:** Friends or relatives are the most likely killers. The myth is usually based on two claims:

- 1) 58 percent of murder victims are killed by either relatives or acquaintances and
- 2) anyone could be a murderer. With the broad definition of "acquaintances" used in the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, most victims are indeed classified as knowing their killer.

However, what is not made clear is that acquaintance murder primarily includes drug buyers killing drug pushers, cabdrivers killed by first-time customers, gang members killing other gang members, prostitutes killed by their clients, and so on.

Only one city, Chicago, reports a precise breakdown on the nature of acquaintance killings: between 1990 and 1995, just 17 percent of murder victims were either family members, friends, neighbors and/or roommates.

Murderers also are not your average citizen. For example, about 90 percent of adult murderers have already had a criminal record as an adult. Murderers are overwhelmingly young males with low IQs and who have difficult times getting along with others. Furthermore, unfortunately, murder is disproportionately committed against blacks and by blacks.

**Myth No. 3:** The United States has such a high murder rate because Americans own so many guns.

There is no international evidence backing this up. The Swiss, New Zealanders and Finns all own guns as frequently as Americans, yet in 1995 Switzerland had a murder rate 40 percent lower than Germany's, and New Zealand had one lower than Australia's. Finland and Sweden have very different gun ownership rates, but very similar murder rates. Israel, with a higher gun ownership rate than the U.S., has a murder rate 40 percent below Canada's.

When one studies all countries rather than just a select few as is usually done, there is absolutely no relationship between gun ownership and murder.

**Myth No. 4:** If law-abiding citizens are allowed to carry concealed handguns, people will end up shooting each other after traffic accidents as well as accidentally shooting police officers.

Millions of people currently hold concealed handgun permits, and some states have issued them for as long as 60 years. Yet, only one permit holder has ever been arrested for using a concealed handgun after a traffic accident and that case was ruled as self-defense. The type of person

willing to go through the permitting process is extremely law-abiding. In Florida, almost 444,000 licenses were granted from 1987 to 1997, but only 84 people have lost their licenses for felonies involving firearms. Most violations that lead to permits being revoked involve accidentally carrying a gun into restricted areas, like airports or schools. In Virginia, not a single permit holder has committed a violent crime. Similarly encouraging results have been reported for Kentucky, Nevada, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas and Tennessee (the only other states where information is available).

**Myth No. 5: The family gun is more likely to kill you or someone you know than to kill in self-defense.**

The studies yielding such numbers never actually inquired as to whose gun was used in the killing. Instead, if a household owned a gun and if a person in that household or someone they knew was shot to death while in the home, the gun in the household was blamed. In fact, virtually all the killings in these studies were committed by guns brought in by an intruder. No more than four percent of the gun deaths can be attributed to the homeowner's gun. The very fact that most people were killed by intruders also surely raises questions about why they owned guns in the first place and whether they had sufficient protection.

How many attacks have been deterred from ever occurring by the potential victims owning a gun? My own research finds that more concealed handguns, and increased gun ownership generally, unambiguously deter murders, robbery, and aggravated assaults. This is also in line with the well-known fact that criminals prefer attacking victims that they consider weak.

These are only some of the myths about guns and crime that drive the public policy debate. We must not lose sight of the ultimate question: Will allowing law-abiding citizens to own guns save lives? The evidence strongly indicates that it does.

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